

T H E
A D V E N T U R E S
O F A
B L A C K C O A T.

C O N T A I N I N G

A SERIES of Remarkable Occurrences and entertaining Incidents,

That it was a Witness to in its Peregrinations through the Cities of London and Westminster, in Company with Variety of Characters.

As related by I T S E L F.

Qui mores hominum multorum vidit. HON.

D U B L I N :

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THE
ADVERTISERS
OF A
BLACK COAT

A Series of Remarkable Occur-
rences and



That it was a
series of events
which were
connected with the
history of the
country.

As related by ITSELF.

Continued from the previous page.

DUBLIN:

Printed for ROBERT B. L. & Co., Bookellers
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on introducing the following
sheets to the public; and as
long prefaces are in general
of little estimation amongst
the readers of books of en-
PREFACE.
tertainment I will express
little upon their patience as
possible.



THE necessity which
custom has in-
tailed upon authors, of
prefixing an apology to their
performances, makes it requi-
site for me to say something

VI PREFACE.

on introducing the following sheets to the public; and as long prefaces are in general of little estimation amongst the readers of books of entertainment, I will trespass as little upon their patience as possible.

To excite virtue, depress vice, and ridicule folly, is as much the business of the Novelist, as it is the design of the Drama; and though the former cannot, like the dramatic

P R E F A C E vii

matic-writer, represent his scenes to the *Senses*, yet it is in his power to set his characters in such a light, as to strike the *Minds* of his readers, in a very forcible manner, with the virtues he would have them imitate, or the errors he would wish them to amend. But our present novel-writers seem to have little else in view than to amuse their readers; or, if they have any design to instruct them, they *gild* the pill so very thick, that

viii P R E F A C E.

all its latent good qualities
are destroyed, or its ef-
fects prevented. To mix
pleasure with instruction, is
certainly the most efficacious
method a writer can take,
to render his labours agreea-
ble to his readers. All I shall
say of the following *petit per-*
formance is, that I have en-
deavoured to make the *Author*
less conspicuous than the
moral.

If

A

P R E F A C E ix

If a blush should arise on
the cheek of conscious vice,
or a sense of shame be awa-
kened in the bosom of folly,
on perusing any of the cha-
racters exhibited in this per-
formance, my intentions will
be answered, and there are
hopes that such are indis-
cuttable. In this age of *Mar-*
gazines and *Chronicles*, y^e the
Coccybus and *Guciber* hath in-
fect'd the town so much, that
almost every shop, work-
room, harbours an author,

* P R E F A C E.

and gentlemen of the *file*, now
leave their more useful labour
at the *vice*, and toil to *polish*
periods. When such gentle-
men assume the pen, I hope it
will not be deemed vanity, if
I decline standing as candidate
for literary fame, and declare
myself not desirous of sharing
with them the *honours* that
may be bestowed on their
labours: but though I profess
myself careless of fame, I am
not callous to contempt; and
should be pleased to hear cri-
tics

P R E F A C E. xi

tics say, that though the *performance* claims no panegyric, yet the *design* of it merits some praise.

Politicians, will find nothing in this little work that will gratify their malevolence; nor has my pen been employed to paragon the wisdom of the present ministry. — In short, state affairs is not the subject of the following pages; neither have I drawn upon myself the enmity of so large
and

xii P R E F A C E

and respectable a body as the clergy, by invading the rich province of religion.

But not to detain my readers any longer, nor awaken their entertainment by anticipating their expectations, I now refer them to the performance itself, if they should not be prejudiced against it, by deeming what they have here read as *bloffoms of weeds*.

T H E



THE
ADVENTURES
OF A
BLACK COAT.

A Sable coat, whose venerable
parents confess a life of busi-
ness, and a length of years,
long had hung sole tenant of a
wardrobe; till a gay white coat
with care was ushered in, and laid
at decent length: when lo! with
mortal voice, and sounds articulate,
Sable was thus heard to address the
stranger: "Thy presence, spark,
warns

warns me of my approaching dissolution; but when I cast a retrospect over my former life, and behold thy native purity and unblemished form, I cannot but pity the many and various misfortunes thou art, in all probability heir to." — To whom, White, "And when I behold thy queer shape and rustic aspect, I cannot but return thy pity, and offer up my prayers against longevity." — Sable replied, "Boy, know that the depredations of time, and the unseemly appearance of industry, are not proper subjects of ridicule: were it possible thou couldst foresee the train of misfortunes, which in the course of thy existence, and revolutions of thy fortune, thou wilt be subject to, that gay, and happy mien

mien would be changed to a gloomy
 and melancholy aspect. Here White
 bowed humbly, craved the sage's
 pardon, and supplicated his advice in
 the conduct of his life. Sable, find-
 ing it a coat of manners, and plea-
 sed with the deference paid to his im-
 portance, thus answered, "To give
 advice is easy, but to profit by it is
 difficult. I will therefore (if thou
 hast patience to listen) rehearse to
 thee the vicissitudes of my fortune,
 from my first formation to this time,
 so that thou mayst profit by my mis-
 fortunes, and learn to bear thy lot,
 (whate're it may be) with patience
 and resignation; and believe me thou
 wilt have occasion for philosophy."
 White politely expressing his desire
 to be informed of the sage's life, he
 said thus

thus proceeded: When I contemplate the scenes I have experienced, and meditate on the vile schemes I have been obliged to countenance in those whose sole merit and reputation arose from my close attachment to them, my very threads blush at the indignity. Here Sable was heard to sigh most piteously, and White, 'tis thought, laughed in his sleeve. After a pause of some minutes—Sable thus opened the relation of his adventures.

The death of a late Princess was the era of my formation, at which time I was called to this state as a symbol of sorrow, (formed by R.'s skillful hand) for the use of a commoner of distinguished abilities. With him,

him, in the senate-house, have I seen the best heads have the worst hearts, and fallacious eloquence silence truth, when delivered in simplicity of language: but being naturally of a volatile disposition, this life of idleness, for it was seldom I appeared in public, grew irksome to me, and I languished to see the world. My wishes were at length gratified; the limited time of mourning being expired, I was disposed of to a favourite domestic, who soon after, for a small consideration, consigned me over to Mr. —, a merchant in Monmouth-Street.

Here properly I may say I began to exist; my heart dilated with joy at the prospect of seeing life, and
 asso-

associating with the various characters that visit this place.

I was soon introduced by my new owner to the class of *occasional gentlemen*, each of whom I had the mortification to see frequently depart from our prison of dust and moths, and enjoy liberty and fresh air; many objecting to me on account of my size, which was then far above the common, though now, as you may see, below it, having lately been curtailed by the degrading scissars of a botcher, and refused by more from my colour. At length an Irish footman, after being disappointed by the whole class of *Beaus*, who were not equal to his Herculean breadth of shoulders,

BLACK COAT. 19

ders, determined to appear in a character of gravity, and sallied forth with me on his back.

Various were my conjectures where this enterprizing genius was carrying me, nor was I quite free from fear of receiving stripes, from the temerity of my adventures; for I concluded it was not an expedition squared by the rules of right and wrong; especially as many of our community frequently brought home with them marks of various disasters, sometimes being dragged through a horse-pond, at other times rolled in a kennel, besides numberless canings and kickings, and were generally afterwards delivered over to the inhumanity of a scowrer, who

what impaired us more, with the variety of brushes, he tormented us with, than a whole year of service.

But I was surprized, and not a little pleased, when I found this bold spark knock at the door of one of the managers of the theatres; the door being opened, this worthy member of the party-coloured society, was introduced to the manager, and my fears of a drubbing subsided. The ceremony of salutation being ended, my conductor was desired to open his business, which he did, with a genuine Munster accent, in the following words, as near as I can remember; Sir, finding myself *capacitated* to appear upon the

the stage from my *internal* figure, and other qualifications, I am come to offer you the *refusal* of me, in deference to the other house." (The manager expressed his thanks for the favour he intended him, and requested him to name the characters he thought she was the most capable to perform. "Look you, Mr. Ladi," says this Hibernian Refusor, "let us first settle the salary you are willing to give me, for 'tis not my way to take a *certainty* for an *uncertainty*." The manager demonstrated that it was impossible to offer any salary before he was acquainted with his merit. Our hero replied, "Why there is Mr. —, I think I am not *superior* to him in any thing, and he has, I am told, 1000l.

1000l. a year; therefore I would not ask more for the first year."—
1000l. 10 year. (replied the manager) may not be equal to your merit; Mr. — is a favourite of the town, and that is one reason of his being paid so much. — By the almighty heavens! exclaimed the Munster hero, I shall be as great a favourite as he, with all the ladies soon; for I am as well proportioned a man as he is, and I don't care a fig for him."—Upon my word, Sir, says the manager, I believe you would beat him; but Sir, I believe you have made a small mistake. — As how?—replied the Hibernian genius;—Why Sir, you have mistaken the house. Mr. Broughton lives in the Hay-market, where, if you will
1000l. give

give yourself the trouble to call upon him, you may perhaps meet with encouragement on his amphitheatre,—“Why you little *Crature*, replied Teague, I have a great mind to take satisfaction upon your small bones.—But here the manager prudently made his exit, and left the enraged footman to his soliloquy, who, after venting many execrations and threatnings, left the house, and marched with me to my old habitation, where being arrived, he suddenly disrobed himself, and with a curse threw me on the floor, then put on his accustomed garb, adorned with the *insignia* of his profession, and issued forth with hasty strides, to attend the humble duties of his station.

This

This my first adventure was not over-pleasing to me; however, I comforted myself with reflecting, that I was seeing characters and life, for which I had a longing desire that seemed implanted in my nature; and though I am sensible no coat of prudence ought to cherish such a desire, yet, at the same time, I am certain, much useful knowledge may be drawn from observing the various characters that are to be met with in this metropolis. But to proceed!

Three months I lingered in dull apathy and close imprisonment; which to a coat of such a volatile spirit as I was then, was worse than total dissolution, or the tormenting
needle

needle of a betcher, than which nothing was half so dreadful to me) thrice a week indeed a general review was made of our company, and every one cleaned with cane and brush from moths and dust. But now a young gentleman of a most graceful appearance, ordered me to be tried upon him. I was fearful of being something too large, but the desire I had to accompany this agreeable youth, made me contract every thread to clasp him; and I so far succeeded, that he seemed equally pleased with me as I with him. In short, we soon left the neighbourhood of St. Giles's, and with genteel deportment he conducted me towards the court-end of the town, each, if I may be allowed to

say so much in my own praise, lending grace to the other.

Being arrived near St. James's (after traversing the park once or twice, during which I could discover great anxiety of mind in my conductor; and feel his heart throb with great force) he stopt at a house that bespoke the owner to be a man of distinction, and being entered the hall, he enquired if his lordship was to be spoke with; being answered in the affirmative, he was immediately waited upon up stairs, and introduced into a spacious room, which was almost filled with gentlemen who were waiting for his lordship: from the time of his entering the house I found his heart beat with stronger emotions,

ons, from whence I concluded he was near some important period; I soon discovered the *major domo* was a minister in a certain department, and that this was his lordship's levee;—It was near an hour before his lordship appeared; during this time, I employed myself in an endeavour to discover, from the physiognomy of the persons present, the various expectations that might be traced in each countenance; doubt of success seemed to be predominant in the assembly, and so much was every one engaged in a tacit conversation betwixt himself and his lordship, that for the greatest part of the time a total silence prevailed. At length the doors flew open, and the minister's

all B 2 coming

coming was announced—The peer entered, and with great dignity bowed to his dependants, who returned the salute with humble reverence. His lordship spoke to each with a mild affability, as they stood in rotation, and procrastinating the desires of his dependants, seemed to be the general benefit conferred upon the company. At last it came to be my conductor's turn to address the peer, which he did in the following words, but something inarticulate from his extreme modesty—
—I beg permission to acquaint your lordship that it is this day two years since I had the honour to be put upon your lordship's list, to be employed in an office your lordship should appoint, in the embassy to the
the

the court of Spain, in consequence of an application to your lordship from the honourable Mr. —. Why Sir, replied the minister, I do remember something of Mr. — applying to me in your favour, and 'tis probable I might then put you upon my list, but I can never think it is two years since. — I would not, return'd the youth, impose upon your lordship, nor assert a falsity. Pray Sir, rejoined the peer, did you ever apply to me since the first application? My lord answered the young gentleman, I have attended your lordship's levee constantly once a month since, and should oftener, but was fearful of being troublesome to your lordship—Do you understand Spanish and the other re-

quisites for such a station, Sir? says the peer—My lord, urged my companion, permit me to say, it is now more than a twelvemonth since your lordship pointed out to me the necessary qualifications, and permit me also to add, my lord, that I have dissipated my small fortune, in attaining those qualifications, and rendering myself equal to the service, so that I might not disgrace your lordship's choice.—I am sorry, returned his lordship, that it is not in my power to serve you, for all the employments have been disposed of some time ago.—I hope your lordship, replied the astonished youth, will serve me some other way, as a recompence for my loss of time, and the injury my fortune has suffered,

by your lordship's unhappily forgetting me.—I don't remember, says, the absent peer, that I recommended you to lay out your money in any thing about this affair; but if I did, I suppose I then intended to appoint you, but it is now too late Sir, and I wou'd advise you to think of something else. — I should presume, says the unfortunate youth, on your lordship's knowledge that it has cost me upwards of 200*l.* in qualifying myself, agreeable to your lordship's order, your lordship, out of humanity, wou'd favour me with something that might retrieve my shattered fortune.—What you understand the Spanish language, Sir? says his lordship.—Perfectly, replied the alarmed youth. Why then, re-

turned the peer, you have the advantage of me, and may receive ample satisfaction, in reading the history of Don Quixote in the original language, and with that piece of wit, he politely took his leave of our thunderstruck youth, who on recollecting himself exclaimed, *Aesop's fable of the boys and frogs* is here fatally exemplified, what is sport to him, is death to me, and instantly departed, bending his steps towards the Bird-Cage walk in the Park, where sitting upon a bench he passed two hours in silent meditation, but at length rousing from his melancholy reverie, with a start that put every thread of me to the proof, he took the resolution of entering as a private soldier in the guards, and hoped that while
he

he might be upon duty under the cruel minister's window, the reflection that he had drove him to that course of life for bread, might if his soul was not callous to every sensation, make him feel the pangs of wantonly ruining a man who had never injured him. Thus resolved, he hastened with me to my old habitation, where leaving me, he fled, as I suppose, to execute his ill-fated purpose.

After undergoing the press for some hours, on my return, (a custom we were all subject to, the frequency of which I may say was the chief cause of my early decay) I indulged myself in reflecting on the days adventure, which led me naturally to con-

temple on the many young people who quit a life of industry and competence, and pursue the phantom of hope, through the various mazes of misery she wantonly leads them ; stimulated at first perhaps by choice, but at length are forced to persevere through necessity, and how oft does she lead these unhappy men to total destruction ; seating herself in the mid ocean and beckoning to her followers, who seldom have the power to see the distance she is from the shore, or perceive the whirlpools that intervene, but keeping their eye fixed upon her, plunge in and are lost ! But, continued the sage, I fear I am rather troublesome, than entertaining to you. I beg returned the gay spark, you will make no apology,

gy, for I am very far from thinking your observations will be the least entertaining part of your narration.

---Sable replied, young gentleman; I believe you speak ingenuously, and am pleased I have an opportunity, before I leave this miserable state, of communicating any thing that may hereafter be of service to one who appears so deserving of it.

White politely thanked him for the compliment, and Sable thus proceeded in the relation of his adventures.

It was not long ere I was again summoned to the duties of my station, by a tall genteelish kind of a person, who ordered me to be tryed upon him, and I was engaged by him for the day.

day. Notwithstanding I thought myself a tolerable good physiognomist, yet the appearance and deportment of this stranger caused my fancy (that weatherecock of judgment) to vary so often, that it was impossible for me to fix any criterion: he had much the air of a gentleman, but his gentility seemed a kind of a habit, that he had acquired since he came to years of maturity, and appeared to be only superficial, from the effect of close observation, rather than the air and grace which naturally results from the manners being properly cultivated and corrected in youth.— In short he was altogether a contradiction, and intirely conquered my sagacity, which greatly added to the

the

the natural desire I had of proving the adventure.

It was in the morning that my unknown conductor took me through the busy streets into the city, and entering a coffee-house, near the Exchange, almost filled with company, he spent some time before he could resolve where to seat himself; at length he determined on a place, which, to me, appeared the most inconvenient one in the room, it being in a box that was already almost full; where he breakfasted and read the papers, but seemed more intent upon remarking the company, than on the news of the day. We stayed here about an hour, when my conductor rose up, and taking a gentleman's

tleman's hat instead of his own, was leaving the room. As soon as the owner observed the mistake, on acquainting him with it, he asked the gentleman pardon, and at the same time informed him, that he was so extremely near-sighted, that without the help of his glass, (which he had unfortunately left at home) he was continually mistaking; the gentleman begged he would make no apology, as every man was liable to mistake; shortly after he took an opportunity to go away without paying for his breakfast, which made me conclude he had likewise unfortunately left his memory at home. This caused me to reflect that I was very indifferently situated in being obliged to accompany a
man

man that went into company without either eyes or memory, and I must own I began not to half like the prospect of this adventure.——

Soon after leaving this coffee-room, he went into another, where seating himself as before, he drank a dish of chocolate, and on his leaving the place, his eyesight again failed him, and he mistook another gentleman's hat for his own again, and went off with it without interruption or paying for his chocolate: this second mistake alarmed me greatly, fearing lest the owner of the hat should be in pursuit of us, who possibly might not shew so much regard for the infirmity of my conductor as the other gentleman had, or not entertain so favourable an opinion of his veracity,

city, especially as the difference in value of the hat, was greatly in favour of this near-sighted spark, which circumstance I observed in the preceding mistake likewise; but my fears ceased, when coming into Corn-hill I heard him call a coach, and stepping in, ordered the coachman to drive to Covent-Garden, but in Fleet-street he ordered him to stop in middle Temple-lane, and to set him down at a certain door there; on the coach stopping at the place appointed, he ordered the coachman to wait, and I imagined that he was calling upon his lawyer, but found he only went through a public office, which opened into two different places and was used as a thoroughfare.

Having

BLACK COAT. 41

Having passed the other door, he very leisurely walk'd across the court, and so into Fleet-street, and from thence, without stopping, he conducted me to the piazzas, Covent-Garden. This extraordinary absence of thought in leaving the coachman to wait for him, when it appeared evident he did not intend to return to him, created some reflections in me that did not end greatly in his favour; nor did they leave me in great tranquillity, for my mind run now upon nothing but horseponds, duckings, and kickings, which I had heard my companions speak of suffering, and which I knew I must chiefly sustain, should any instance of his infirmities terminate unfavourable. But to return, being arrived

arrived in the piazza's in Covent-Garden, as I mentioned before, from thence we ascended a pair of stairs, and I found myself in a room amidst a great number of very genteel people, some of whom were of the first fashion; I soon perceived it was an auction-room; then my fears began to operate upon me, lest some of my gentleman's faculties should again fail him, and the ill consequence I dreaded would fall upon me; but every thing remained quiet for a considerable time; at length a chaired-watch, by Tompion, was put up, which I found had a very strong effect upon my adventurer, though I could not devise the cause, for as I knew he had not sixpence about him, I could not conceive he intended

ed to bid for it ; as the bidders advanced he became more anxious, marking every one who bid, very strictly.—In the conclusion a certain nobleman, who is observed to attend these kind of sales with great punctuality, bid 80 guineas, and was knocked down the best bidder, and the watch set down to Lord—. My adventurous spark now seemed calm and determined, and instantly quitting the room, went into a tavern near ; where ordering a bottle of Madeira, and pen and ink, he took from his pocket a message-card and wrote as follows—
 “ The earl of — seeing lord —’s
 “ equipage standing at —’s auction-room door, begs the favour of
 “ his lordship’s company at— for a
 “ moment

"moment. — Having just received
 "an accident upon my right hand —
 "writes this to you, and promises to
 "take it to your lordship himself."
 — Having wrote this he orders the
 master of the tavern to attend him,
 who being come, our spark, after
 splitting the card, and securing the
 writing by a wafer, told him he
 should be much obliged to him if he
 would take that card to lord — at
 —'s auction: the landlord assured
 him he would, but, adds, this cau-
 tious genius, deliver it to — the
 auctioneer, and he will hand it
 to his lordship: ——— promised to
 obey his orders punctually; the
 landlord being gone, my compa-
 nion, after recruiting his spirits with
 a glass of wine, immediately de-
 camps,

camp, leaving orders to acquaint lord — he would return before his lordship could be seated, and immediately goes and posts himself in a place where he could see his lordship come from the auction-room: very short was his stay before he saw his lordship, attended by the landlord, step into his chariot, and drive to the tavern; our bold youth was as good as his word, and followed his lordship in to the room before he was well seated, and told him that the cart of — was “just drove into the next street, and had ordered him to wait upon his lordship with an apology for leaving the room, but that he would be with him in an instant.” This excuse delivered with a good grace

grace by a seeming gentleman, satisfied his lordship, and seating himself, our hero took his leave of his lordship, and going to the bar, told — the landlord, that he must go to — the auctioneer, and tell him, “that lord — desired him to send “the watch he had lately purchased “by him, as he just wanted to shew “it to the earl of” ——. Away goes the landlord and acquaints the auctioneer with his lordship’s desire; the auctioneer knowing the landlord, and seeing the lord — go out with him just before, made no hesitation, but delivers him the watch, who on meeting my gentleman at the door, put it into his hand, and he slipping it into his coat-pocket, again goes into his lordship, and telling him
 “the

“ the earl of — begged his pati-
 “ ence a few minutes longer, as he
 “ had now just finished the affair he
 “ was upon, and hoped he would
 “ stay, as he had something to ac-
 “ quaint him with that would sur-
 “ prise him very much”. His lord-
 ship answered it was very well; up-
 on which our sharper left his lord-
 ship to wonder what it could be that
 would surprize him so much, and I
 make no doubt but in a short time
 he was greatly surprized.

The planning of this artifice con-
 tinued Sable, gave me a high
 opinion of our sharper's ingenuity,
 and the dexterity with which he
 conducted it, entirely removed all
 my fears of any accident happen-
 ing.

ing to us. After this successful exploit, he walked through a few streets and then took a coach, ordering the coachman to drive to a tavern near the Exchange in the city; by this method he eluded the vigilance of a pursuit, which he imagined must succeed his lordship's discovering the imposition, and which no doubt was in a very short time after sent forth.

Being arrived at the tavern he ordered the coachman to take his money at the bar, and was shewn into a very handsome room; he immediately ordered a genteel dinner consisting of five dishes, and ordered two courses, saying he expected a gentleman to dine with him, and
ordered

ordered if any one enquired for
 Sir ~~to~~ to show him in; but I should
 have mentioned to you that as the
 coach was passing by the Temple
 he ordered one of the porters who
 ply there, to take a card which he
 had been writing upon in the coach,
 to the very instant he had ordered
 the coachman to drive to, with strict
 orders for the porter to be there with
 it by six o'clock; this card was direct-
 ed to the knight whose name and
 title he had now assumed. By
 the time he imagined dinner was
 ready, he rang and ordered the
 cook not to spoil the dinner, but
 when it was ready to bring it in,
 saying he would not wait a minute
 for the king, in prejudice to the
 skill of the cook, whom he or-
 dered

dered to take a pint of wine at the
 bar. Dinner being ended, and the
 cloath removed, chabotain and bure
 gundy were ordered, and he sat very
 composedly entertaining himself in
 meditating on the labour of the great
 Thompson; and from thence took
 occasion to reflect on his own im-
 genuity, which he justly boasted
 was not inferior to that famous ar-
 tist, though it run in a different
 channel. At the whol of five the
 waiter entered with a card for Sir
~~_____~~ on which was wrote these
 words: "To Lord ~~_____~~'s compli-
 ments to Sir ~~_____~~, asks ten
 thousand pardons for not attend-
 ing him at dinner as appointed;
 begs Sir ~~_____~~ will not go till
 he comes, which will not exceed
 half

“half an hour.” The card was purposely wrote upon to the view of every one, which added dignity to our new made knight's former consequence, and ordering the porter to be discharged at the bar, he sat a few minutes; when ringing the bell he ordered the waiter to tell his master to come to him, who soon appearing, he desired him to sit and fill a glass of wine, and entering into a familiar conversation with him, in a short time enquired if there was ever a shop near where he could purchase a gold chain to his watch, and at the same time produced the property of lord ~~xxxx~~, which being in a neat shagreen box, looked at a distance like a shagreen case; the vintner being willing to oblige

oblige a neighbour, told him he could recommend a dealer in those things, who had great choice, and lived only in the next street. Our knight bogg'd he would send for him, with orders to bring some watch chains with him: the vintner immediately dispatched a waiter to the person who soon arrived with a box, and producing some very curious watch chains, my gentleman at last fixed upon one, which came to 5*l*. 1*s*. the spark offered him four for it, but the tradesman being a quaker, told him he never asked more than he intended to take, but however he was still offered 4*l*. 1*s*. and the tradesman refusing was dismissed. — In five minutes the spark rang for the master of the tavern, and

and told him what had passed, adding he greatly liked the chain, and would purchase it, but should take it as a favour if he would go to the man, and see if he could not get it for the money, but if not to bring it with him, and at the same time desired he would tell the tradesman to bring a cornelian seal with a Homer's head for the impression; away went the landlord, and soon after brought the chain with him, but told our genius he could not prevail upon him to take any thing less than he had asked; that he had never a cornelian with a Homer, but had sent to a friend in the next street who he believed had one, and he would bring him word in ten minutes: during the landlord's absence,

this ingenious gentleman had taken out the watch and left the shagreen box upon the shelf over the fire-place, in full view of the landlord; who might suppose it was the real watch. Upon looking at the chain, the spark pretended it was not the same he had shewn him before, the landlord told him it was possible he might mistake by candle-light, and offered to go and change it — but the sharper said he would go himself, as he had some suspicion the quaker had a mind to impose upon him, and saying the watch he supposed would be safe upon the shelf, went out of the room, and the landlord shutting the door, told him he would take care no body should come in during his absence: Our

successful

successful sharper now bent his course
to Cheapside with all speed, leaving
the flaggreen box to pay the vint-
ner his reckoning, and the quaker
for his watch chain.

The luxuriancy of my ingenious
confidant's invention in the progress
of this adventure astonished me
greatly, but I'll forbear to trouble
you with my reflections now, and
hasten with him to the play-house.

Being arrived in Cheapside, he
takes a coach and orders himself to
be drove to the Rose in Bridges-street
Covent Garden, and the coach stop-
ping at the door the coachman de-
scended to let him out, but was
ordered to go into the tavern and

enquire if Mr. ——— was in the house; the enquiry through every room he knew must take up some minutes, and give him time to let himself out at the other side of the coach, which he effected with great privacy and expedition, and immediately set forward for Covent Garden play-house, taking his way up Bow-street, purposely avoiding, as I apprehended, the scene of his morning adventure. — Here Sable was interrupted in his narrative, by the arrival of his owner, who brought in with him an old cloaths-man, and handing the black narrator down delivered him to this new vender of old commodities; who after perusing him with great attention and sagacity, making his head declared he could

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not give any thing for it, adding, if it had been so much used, it would not hold together for a single day's wear, and as for repairing it, he said it was impossible from the rottenness of it, nor could it be converted into patches, as in fact, he said, it consisted of nothing else but patches, and returning it to the owner, desired him to keep it as a curiosity, swearing he never saw such a thing in his life: upon this Sable was once more conducted to the wardrobe, and hung on the peg he had been removed from.

Sable (half recovered from his fright) soon was heard to utter these words.—My loved companion, and adopted son, indulge me a few mi-

minutes to recover my breath—White with great tenderness, begged he would make no apology, for though he was exceeding anxious to know what had caused the fright he was in, he would not think of being gratified till he was perfectly recovered—after a few minutes pause the frightened veteran thus broke forth—Where is the philosophy, the calm resignation, I fancied I could meet my last hour with? alas! I find I have learned nothing that is worth retaining, since I have not learned to bear the near approach of my dissolution without trembling; why should I wish to exist, or linger in this decayed and miserable state, when the momentary shock of death is succeeded by a total annihilation?

lation? Here White interrupting him, begged to know the cause of such sad reflections. My son, returned Sable, bear with the infirmities of age; the frequency of contemplating on death, I believe me, greatly lessens its terrors — if the danger is now over, and my fears are subsided. Here Sable recounted his late adventure with the dealer in old cloaths, — so which having concluded, he proceeded in the relation of the many and surprizing changes of fortune. (But here, readers, lest thou shouldst imagine this digression from the chain of adventures as related by our Black Hero, is an artifice calculated to extend this work, — that no such interruption ever happened, but what

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what was made by ourselves, on purpose to cke out this part of our performance, we do assure thee, that nothing but sacred truth obliged us to relate it, and which we shall at all times think ourselves bound in justice to do; therefore, courteous reader, if thou shouldst meet in the progress of this entertaining history, with instances of a similar nature, we advise thee not to pronounce them fiction; for were we inclined to enlarge this performance, the bare recital of numberless minutes, which we have and shall suppose, would extend it to volumes; and if thou wilt favour us with thy company to the end of this work, thou wilt find such little arts were needless, the simple narrative alone affording

fording us ample matter for thy entertainment, and which thou may find faithfully recorded in the following pages—The sharper, resumed Sable, being arrived at the play-house, and going to the box-door, he overtook a company of ladies and gentlemen, who were going into the house, and stepping before them, ordered the box-keeper to open the door, saying the servant belonging to the company would pay for all—the box-keeper seeing the company behind, imagined our spark of the party, therefore without hesitation lets him in: as soon as he was within he posts himself in such a manner as to hear what passed at the box-door without being seen, the company being come in.—The sharper concluded I need not

up were surprized to find themselves charged with one more than they knew of, and disowning acquaintance with my adventurer, refused to pay for him; the box keeper not having time to go in search of him then, ordered an under box-keeper to look sharp for him as he came out; our spark hearing this seemed very well satisfied—which was much more than I was—and after going from box to box, he at length seated himself in one of the corner green boxes, in which was only an old gentleman; but on the latter account our number was increased by the addition of two ladies of the town and two gentlemen—the sharper prudently sat as far back in the box as he could, to avoid being seen, I concluded.—The entertainment

tainment being ended, and the company preparing to depart, to my amazement, this bold adventurer seizes a red rocqueleau that was hung in the box, and was going to put it on—when the old gentleman told him, with great politeness, he fancied he had made a mistake, for the rocqueleau belonged to him—The sharper, with astonishing effrontery, replied, by your leave, Sir, 'tis you that mistake; for the rocqueleau is mine.—Your rocqueleau? returned the gentleman, indeed it is, replied this son of impudence. Sir, says the stranger, as you have the appearance of a gentleman, I cannot think you mean any thing more than a jest; but let me tell you, Sir, added he, I am not used to be treated so with impunity.—Sir, returned

turned the sharper, it is not my custom to jest with men of your appearance, nor do I expect such treatment from you. — Why sure, says the gentleman, you will not pretend to persuade me seriously that this is not my rocqueleau? That this rocqueleau is mine, Sir, says my companion, I do aver, and will maintain my property,—adding this is the strangest piece of impudence that ever was practised.—Indeed, says the gentleman, so it is, if you pretend to say this is your rocqueleau, when I brought it in, and hung it up before you came.—The sharper alledged he brought it in, and hung it up on his coming in.—This strange dispute whose property the rocqueleau was, created much mirth in the ladies and gentlemen

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in the box, but created far different sensations in me, who saw no possibility of our hero's maintaining his assertion with any credit, consequently there was little probability of my escaping a horse pond, or some such dire mishap, especially as I saw the old gentleman begin to wax warm. — But to proceed,—the owner of the rocqueleau persisted in claiming it, and the sharper as strongly insisted on its being his—in conclusion, my ingenious companion asked him, if he could point out any mark or any thing whereby it might be determined by the company that it was his.—The gentleman replied, he knew of no mark upon it, for that it was never on his back before that afternoon, being quite new; upon that my gentleman exclaimed

Amaze-

Amazement! that a man of your years should undertake to play the sharper with no other abilities than bare impudence—Zouns, returned the strange gentleman, you are a sharper, and since you talk of marks, by what mark do you know it—let us see how you will prove it to be yours—make that appear, Sir, exulting and appealing to the company, who yet could not tell what to make of the affair, sometimes inclining one way, and sometimes another.—Why, Sir, says the impostor, I would have come to that at first, but that I was willing to see what ingenious device you would make use of to support your unjust pretensions; but as I see you take advantage of the coolness of my temper,

temper, and confidently think to bully me out of my property, I will submit to the company to determine whom the rocqueleau belongs to, and, continues he, I believe I shall put an end to the dispute very shortly to your confusion; and then turning to the company, told them if the rocqueleau was his there were two X's marked in the inside near the bottom: the gentlemen looked and found two X's mark'd in the place our ingenious sharper had directed. — The old gentleman stood petrified with amazement — but recovering himself, swore still the rocqueleau was his, but how those damned X's came there he could not tell. — The rocqueleau being adjudged the property of our hero, he now
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put it on, telling the old gentleman, his age should protect him from punishment; and advised him to leave off a profession he seemed unable to succeed in. The gentleman knowing the rocqueleau was his, still urged strongly he brought it in with him, and that it was his. — The ladies now began to revile him, — whom he treated in very free terms; the gentlemen stood up for their dexies, and the loser of the rocqueleau had no friends, but abused every one in the box with being accomplices in robbing him; upon which the ladies fell upon him, and seizing his large powdered wig, boxed him about the face with it till he was almost blind, and then flinging it into the pit, among the people

people who were gathered under the box with the noise that began to be made, the old gentleman's full-bottom was soon disposed of as well as his roqueleau. — Our adventurer took this opportunity to quit the box, and with the addition of the roqueleau, and by timely using his handkerchief as he passed the box-keeper, went away without suspicion of being the person who bilked him on his coming in. — You will, no doubt wonder, says Sable, how this genius could come by the knowledge of the private marks upon the roqueleau, and your wonder will be no less when I tell you that he himself put them there, whilst the old gentleman was engaged with the performance

formance on the stage; for he, whose study it was to refine upon sharpening, never wanted materials; in the various adventures he might meet with, consequently he was as expert with his needle in sewing the two X's upon the rocqueleau, as a surgeon would be in using his lancet on a sudden emergency.—But to finish with this gentleman.—This last exploit being ended, he takes me through many alleys and dark passages; at length ascending a mean stair-case as high as he could, he gave the signal of admittance, and the door was opened, when there appeared to my sight, sitting round a table, four persons; one in the habit of a clergyman, another in the character of a farmer, a third

was

BLACK COAT. 71

was a laced beau, and the fourth an honest looking tradesman, and I observed every one had before him watches, rings, swords, snuff-boxes, purses with money, and other things of value, which I afterwards found were the several labours of the day, which had been gained by these honest looking gentlemen in the same capacity as my adventurer — but our ingenious spark producing the watch by Tompion, gold chain, rocqueleau, and an exceeding good hat instead of a bad one, he was deemed the most meritorious of the whole fraternity for that day. A division being made, and the several characters fixed for the succeeding day (when my companion was to assume the appearance of a country

try farmer) they all adjourned to a tavern, where they spent the evening in recounting the methods they had taken in acquiring the valuable collection I had seen upon the table ; on leaving the tavern each took a separate road, my adventurer taking me to the place from whence we last came, and I understood the rendezvous of the next day was to be at the parson's lodging, which I found they changed nightly.—In the morning early this industrious gentleman conducted me to my old habitation in Monmouth-Street, unhurt, after all the perils of the preceding day, to my great satisfaction, where after suffering the corroding brush, and racking press as usual, I was at liberty to indulge my reflections,

lections, and the last day's expedition afforded me ample matter. Gods! exclaimed Sable, could I have credited that such things were really practised, had I not been a witness to them!

Is it not, says the sage adventurer to his gay companion, greatly to be lamented, that men of such excellent talents, should prostitute them to such hurtful purposes to the community, and reversing morality, industriously pursue evil, that they may boast of blemishes they should rather blush for; as he amongst these pillagers of society, is esteemed the most worthy who is the most wicked. But I will not, continued Sable, spend the precarious minutes

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in making reflections which your own perspicuity will furnish you with, but proceed in the detail of my next adventure.

I was next, continued Sable, ordered by a tall long visaged person to be tried upon him, and the Monmouth-street merchant pronounced that if I had been cut out on purpose for him, I could not have fitted him better; on this I was engaged by him for the day. I soon discovered by some detached pieces of poetry in blank verse, and other papers of the like nature put into my pocket, that I was accompanying an author.—His wan and dead complexion made me at first imagine him to be a per-

son confined to a sedentary life, but notwithstanding his unfavourable aspect, I could conceive strong marks of the gentleman, and likewise imagined him to be a scholar, though the rays of learning which beamed from his countenance, seemed to be clouded by misfortune and care.—But to proceed, three times did this son of Apollo attend the door of a certain great man, before he could gain admittance: the first time the servant said his master was dressing, the second time he was busy, and the third we were so fortunate as to be shewn into a small antechamber, with directions to sit down, and my comrade should be informed when he could speak with this very great man, whom,

but for the situation of the house, I should have imagined was a prime minister: at last, after waiting above an hour, my companion was desired to walk into a parlour, where was sitting by the fire side, surrounded by half a dozen little kittens, an old man (gentleman I cannot with propriety term him). Without asking the gentleman to sit, he began, — Well, sir, what do you want with me? I wait upon you, sir, replied the author, in relation to a play I some time ago left in your hands.—How long since? says this well mannered gentleman. Fifteen months, Sir, replied the author — O, is that all, says he, — well, and pray, what is this extraordinary play of yours, continues he, a tragedy,

I suppose? It is a tragedy, Sir, answered the author, still standing, (which gave me an opportunity of remarking a letter that lay upon the table directed to the manager of one of the theatres). What do you call it? says this important gentleman. It is called—, replied the author, — and hope it has met with your approbation, continued he.— O, to be sure, says the sneering manager, without reading it,——I imagined, says the author, you would have been kind enough to have indulged me with a couple of hours out of fifteen months to have perused it, or if you did not intend to peruse it, you would have returned it me again. Ay, ay, says the manager; you shall have it again, take

it away with you in God's name —
(looking among a parcel of papers)
I don't mean, Sir, returned the author, to take it from you unless you should reject it, after you have read it. — Why, Sir, says the manager, did not you this moment ask me to return it? If you had no intention to peruse it, says the author. Peruse it! replies the manager — why, Sir, do you think I have nothing else to do than as soon as ever people of your way of living have wrote a thing, to play it immediately? what, I suppose, continues he, you think I should read it, alter it, expunge, and add to it, then rehearse it and so perform it, that you might receive the benefit all in ten days or a fortnight? — No, no, Sir you are too quick.

quick for me ; let's see where is this thing (looking over a bundle of manuscript plays) — what is the *procession* in your play, continued the manager? I shall best find it by that, for they are all marked. — There is no *procession* at all in mine, Sir, says the author. — No *procession*! Sir, says the amazed manager, what do you mean? — perhaps you call it — a *solemn dirge* — a *triumph* — or an — *ovation* — or — There is nothing at all of the kind Sir, says the author, in my play, nor did I apprehend, says he, it was absolutely necessary to — Necessary? interrupted the manager, — pray, Sir, what would nine out of ten of the tragedies that have come out within these 20 years have been good for, if it had

not been for the processions; but if yours has no procession, adds he, I am sure it is not amongst these; (laying the papers he had been looking over down)—but we shall find it presently somewhere, I warrant you—a procession not necessary!—(looking for the play)—By this time the author began to entertain a most sovereign contempt for him, as I judged from his countenance. — At length the manager produced the play, but in such a condition! some part wanting half a leaf, some a quarter, others three quarters, and what remained was in tatters, and strangely smeared and stained, having been frequently used no doubt in taking the tea-kettle off the fire, and other such worthy employments.

BLACK COAT. 81

ployments, as I saw him take it from under a coffee pot that stood in the window.—The author at first was astonished when he saw it, but recovering himself, calmly said, he believed it had been perused, for by the appearance of it, it seemed to have been often in his hands; and opening it—Really, Sir, says the author, you have been in a mistake, for it is evident you have read it over, and have *expunged* several pages of it, (shewing him the dismembered play) — and, continues he, dare say you will be able to get through it in a short time, therefore will continue it in your hands, and hope you will be so obliging as to *add to it*.—No, no, Sir, replied the manager, I shall give myself

no farther trouble about it; as for the leaves being torn, some of the servants can give you the best account of them—If, continued he, there had been a *procession* in it—Here he was interrupted, by the arrival of a person with a Harlequin's dress, and the author laying the mangled play upon the table, took his leave, giving place to *Harlequin*—a circumstance that ought not to give him much pain, as it is no more than what the best dramatic authors both ancient and modern, have frequently done.

This tragic gentleman having conducted me home, continued Sable, I was again deposited among my old acquaintance, the *occasional gentlemen,*

BLACK COAT. 83

gentlemen, from whose conversation I received much useful knowledge and rational entertainment. But to proceed——

My next excursion, resumed Sable, was with a person who conducted me from my habitation in Monmouth-Street, to an indifferent apartment in an alley near Chancery-Lane where he adorned himself with the military ensigns, a cockade and sword, and marched with me to a tavern in the city, where being shewn into a room, he left word if any body enquired for an officer, to shew them in to him, and seating himself he drew from his pocket a letter, in which were these words in an excellent
—do let woman's

woman's hand—“Dear cap.—
“my papa has received your letter,
“and tells me he shall meet you
“at the time and place you have
“appointed—I shall be impatient
“to know the result of this interest-
“ing conversation, and hope it will
“prove favourable to your—”. This
letter was directed to be left at a
coffee-house in the Strand for my
companion. He did not wait long
before a plain decent looking trades-
man was introduced to him—My
comrade received him with an af-
fected politeness, which was return-
ed by the stranger, with an auk-
ward civility: being both seated,
the coldness of the weather was the
first topic of conversation, the
tradesman making a sorrowful ob-
servation:

servation on the dearness of provisions, and that coals were risen that day; the military gentleman joined in lamenting the hardness of the times, and concluded the subject by pitying the poor; the stranger then filled a bumper, and knocking his glass against the captain's drank to their better acquaintance, which having taken off, Mr. Sirlain, (that being the stranger's name) after a few minutes silence on both sides, began the discourse, by saying to my companion, that he believed he had received a letter from him in relation to his daughter Susan. The captain answered, he should make no ceremony in telling him that he professed a regard for the young lady—

Young

Young lady, says Mr. Sirloin, I beg, Sir, you'll not young lady my daughter.—Susan is a good likely girl for that matter, but as for being a young lady, I don't know what title she has to that. Indeed her mother, who has had the whole management of her, has always filled the girl's head with a parcel of nonsense. Your plain way of thinking, returned the captain, I highly approve, but her education entitles her to.—Ay, interrupted Mr. Sirloin, that was against my will too, but my wife would have it so, and so she was sent to a boarding school; to be sure, continued he, as she was but a half boarder, I came into it for peace and quietness, but if it was to do again—for, added he, she

she has learned nothing but to talk of gentility and fashions, and dancings, and plays, and I don't know what.—These things, Sir, answered the captain, are accomplishments which are necessary in every woman who has any pretensions to marry genteelly.—Therefore, Sir, returned Mr. Sirloin, unnecessary for my daughter; for I am sure—I don't know what pretensions she has to think of marrying genteelly, or out of her sphere.—I am a plain man, Sir, as you see, continues he, and to be sure would do every thing for the best for my daughter, and no doubt should like very well to see my daughter made a gentlewoman of; but then, adds he, how is that to be? that's the question—

for

for my part I don't see now a days that gentlemen let 'em have ever so good a fortune, are willing to take a girl for love alone—no offence I hope to you, Sir,—By no means Sir, replied the captain, I assure you, Sir, I esteem your sentiments; and though love is the chief ingredient in a happy marriage, yet to make it quite compleat, a little fortune is necessary.—Now I rather think, says Mr. Sirloin, as times go, that *fortune* is looked upon as the *chief ingredient*—you'll excuse me, Sir, I am a blunt man.—Pray, Sir, make no apology, replied the captain.—Well, Sir, says Mr. Sirloin, let us now enter upon the business we met upon.—You say you have a regard for my daughter, I suppose you mean love. I do, Sir,

Sir, answered the captain.—You are an officer, Sir, my daughter tells me.—Yes, Sir, returned the captain, but, to deal ingenuously with you, I am only a younger brother, therefore I can't boast of any great fortune, a thousand pounds or so, besides my commission,—with which, continues he, I am capable of appearing as a gentleman, and hope I have always acted as such.—A thousand pound, says Mr. Sirluin, is a great deal of money in my opinion; I don't know what you may think of it: as for your commission, says he, that's quite out of my way, and therefore I know nothing of it; and now, Sir, continues he, as you have told me who you are, it is but fair that I should tell you who I am.—I am, adds he, a butcher by trade.

trade, and by industry and frugality, I make shift to maintain myself and family with what I call credit, for I make it a rule, never to bespeak any thing for myself, or any of my family, but what I know I can afford, nor let any thing be wore, or made use of, till I have paid for it.—I pay my landlord his rent every quarter day, and I don't owe any man a shilling in the world, and so now, Sir, if you like me, for a father-in-law, without farther ceremony here's my hand, —and done's the word. This close way of doing business, says Sable, I found disconcerted my martial conductor, who evaded closing with the proposal, saying such a thing as marriage required a little more consideration than a bet at a cock-match or a horse-

horse-race—Why look you, Sir, says Mr. Sirloin, this is my way of doing business ; if I see a bullock in the market, which I think is for my purpose, I go and examine him, and if I find that he'll do, I enquire his price, and if its about the mark, I bid money for him, and if my money is accepted, I have the beast; but if not, we part, and there's no harm done, you know; now apply that, Sir.—Well, Sir, returned the captain, to make a matter of trade of this affair, as I profess a regard for your daughter, if you will give me leave to talk with her I will marry her, notwithstanding the disgrace it will be to my family ——— Fortune, Sir! says Mr. Sirloin, what fortune do you

ex-

expect me to give? I suppose, Sir, says the captain, you intend to give her a fortune equal to her education and appearance in the world.

—As for her education and appearance in the world, says Mr. Sirloin,

I have told you how that came about, and that it was not my fault,

and now I'll tell you what I'll give you with her: I'll spend a few guineas in a wedding dinner with all

my heart; but as for fortune, I assure you I have none to give.

—You certainly are in jest, Sir, says the captain, as you have educated

and drest your daughter in the character of a lady of fortune.

Zounds, Sir, says Mr. Sirloin, I tell you

my wife has had the whole management of her, and that it is not my

fault.

fault—This very thing, adds he, have
 I told my wife over and over: for,
 says I, what tradesman do you think
 will have her, as she will to be sure
 expect to live in the manner she has
 been brought up, and if she does
 not, says I, then she will be unhap-
 py; and what tradesman is there,
 says I, that can afford, or if he
 could, wou'd think it proper, to keep
 her like a lady? and what gentle-
 man, says I, will take a butcher's
 daughter without a farthing, only
 because the girl, says I, has a noti-
 on of dress and politeness, as they
 call it? so that, says I, the girl will be
 brought up to be fit for nothing, and
 in the end, says I, turn whore; but
 it signified nothing; for my wife said
 her daughter should be brought up
 and

and draft as well as Mr. Spigot, the ale-house-man's daughter, who was no better than she was, and that something might happen.

Here Mr. Sirloin was interrupted by the sudden entrance of the wife of his bosom, who was followed by Miss Sirloin, as I soon found her to be. — The slayer of oxen was at once astonished and intimidated on seeing his wife; Mr. Sirloin, says the lady, on her entrance, I am surprized at your impolitic behaviour. I have heard every word you have said, and any one would imagine you had no more sense than the *beasts* you kill, to tell a gentleman the circumstances of your family in the manner you have,

have, Mr. Sirloin is a monstrous thing. — Mr. Sirloin declared he had said nothing but the truth, and added that listeners seldom heard any good of themselves. Mrs. Sirloin returned, that he was a poor mean spirited wretch, and had not a grain of ambition in him. Mr. Sirloin replied, he believed it might be better, if some folks had less, and for his part he did not see what business people in his sphere had to do with ambition; for, says he, they are generally getting into some scrape or another.

Miss, during the altercation betwixt her *Papa* and *Mama*, had drawn near the captain, who took very little notice of her. Mrs. Sirloin

Join now addressed herself to the captain, and told him, she hoped he would excuse Mr. Sirloin's want of politeness, and assured him, that though it was true, her daughter was not the largest fortune in the parish, neither was she the least, adding, that as Saky was their only child, she would be entitled to every farthing that would be left on their deaths, and which she durst say would amount to near a hundred pound. To be sure, continues she, if Mr. Sirloin was but a pushing man, he might be able to leave her many hundreds.

Mr. Sirloin said, he understood the captain was in love with Susan, and said he should think with that
and

and the thousand pound he had, they might live very happy. The captain replied, that it was true, he had a great regard for Miss Sirloin, and that his fortune was about a thousand pound; but that as he was of one of the best families in Dorsetshire, it wou'd be a disgrace to it to marry into Mr. Sirloin's family, unless it was made up by a fortune; and that he had been told Miss Sirloin wou'd be worth a thousand pound, and which by her dress, and the company she kept, he thought could be no less. Mr. Sirloin declared, that whoever said he cou'd give his daughter a thousand pound was a *scandalous person*; as for her dress and company, do you, speaking to his wife, answer for that.

The waiter now told Mr. Sirloin, a person would be glad to speak to him, and on his going out, Mrs. Sirloin told the captain, that she presumed his intentions had been honourable, and that his addresses had not been made to her daughter altogether for the *lucre of gain*, the captain protested his love was intirely disinterested; but that he could not on account of his family, think of entering into an alliance with Mr. Sirloin without a fortune.— Mr. Sirloin was now returned, and rubbing his hands, asked if the captain was willing to accept of his daughter or not; the captain strongly urged, that the disgrace it would be to his family would not permit him to engage any farther. Pray,
Sir,

Sir, says Mr. Sirloin, what is this great family you talk so much of?
 —— I am, answered the captain, of the family of the *Fortune-hunters*, which is as ancient a one as any in the kingdom. Mr. Sirloin asked him if he did not know one *John Trott*. — The captain upon this appeared extremely confounded, but, stammer'd out he knew no such person; upon this Mr. Sirloin rang the bell, and asked the waiter if he knew that gentleman, pointing to the captain, —— yes, replied the waiter, very well, his name is John Trott; he was a footman to 'squire--, and was discharged for some misdemeanors about half a year ago; and speaking to the new-made captain, said; you know me very well, Mr.

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Trott,

Trott, don't you? the captain replied, he never saw him before to his knowledge. — Come, come, Mr. Trott, says the waiter don't wink at me, I'll not see any body imposed upon, I know you very well. Mr. Sirloin's choler being now raised to the highest degree, he could not contain himself any longer; but pulling off his wig and coat, told my unfortunate companion, that though he had imposed upon him, he would take no advantages of him but would box him fairly; but the martial hero declined the combat; upon which Mr. Sirloin, giving a loose to his hands and feet together, employed them both so fast upon my unlucky comrade, that it was hard to determine which of them went

BLACK COAT. 101

went the fastest, and my passive conductor seemed resolved to see whether his patience, or Mr. Sirloin's strength would hold out the longest; and Mr. Sirloin being a corpulent man, was at length obliged to give over his labour for want of breath, and thereby the captain's principle of non-resistance, obtained a complete victory over the active vigour of the enraged butcher.

Mr. Sirloin, having a little recovered himself from the fatigue the violent exertion of his strength had occasioned, now turned to his wife and daughter, and told the latter, that for the future she should be under his direction, and bid her see that to morrow, she appeared in the

shop as his daughter, with a coloured apron before her, and dispose of those dangling things at her elbows or he'd burn 'em: the two ladies having seen such manifest proofs of Mr. Sirloin's prowess were intimidated into silence, not even daring to exercise those dreadful weapons their tongues, which were now for the first time, I believed, subdued.

The captain during this had employed himself in wiping the dirt which had been left by Mr. Sirloin's shoes off him, every now and then saying this was fine treatment for a *Gentleman*.

Mr. Sirloin now opened the door, and ordered the martial captain to
leave

leave the room, who seemed very glad to obey him, Mr. Sirloin complimenting him with two or three very handsome kicks at his departure.

The fruits of this adventure, continued Sable, were pretty equally divided betwixt me and my unfortunate associate, though I believe the *marks* of Mr. Sirloin's favours, continued a considerable time longer upon the unsuccessful captain than upon me, a circumstance which instead of creating envy in me, proved rather a matter of consolation.

The address and deportment of this assumed military gentleman,

continued Sable, did not at first discover to me any thing that resembled the gentility of an officer in the army, nor did his lodging correspond with such a character, therefore I imagined he was only in reality, like me a gentleman *pro tempore*.

The descendant of the ancient family of *Fortune-Hunters*, continued Sable, having conducted me again to my former lodging in Monmouth-Street, and a variety of brushes having been used upon me, like a Hackney-horse after a day's journey, I remained some time without any remarkable adventure happening to me; at length, continued Sable, a member of Comus's court, but better known by the significant

cant appellation of a *Choice Spirit*, conducted me to a tavern in the Strand; where I found a number of gentlemen, and the better sort of tradesmen, assembled together, whom I soon learned were the members of a society that met once a week, and that this was their anniversary feast-day. It being in the morning, they were now met together to take a walk, or to spend the time in some amusement, that might best conduce to create an appetite, to enable them to do honour to the approaching entertainment. My companion singled out one, who from his broad sleek face, and rotundity of belly, seemed to have signalized himself at the destruction of many a feast, and by the jocular

speeches of several of the members, together with his own expressions, boasting of his excellence in the masticating way, I was fully confirmed that his being so uncommonly well larded, was owing to his superior merit in the science of eating.

My conductor proposed a walk to this gentleman, but he objected to it, on account of the fatigue it would be to him, and that it might disorder his stomach, which he declared was in excellent order, but said he had no objection to take a little air up the river, and which he fancied, with now and then a glass of wine and bitters, they might carry with them, would strengthen his appetite; this proposal was accepted

cepted by my comrade, and two other gentlemen agreed to accompany them; accordingly at Somerset-stairs a boat was hired, and the watermen ordered to row them up to Putney.

During our voyage this son of Comus regaled the worthy disciples of Epicurus, with some gingerbread nuts he had brought with him, at first he refused to eat any, fearing he said they would damp his appetite, but my spark telling him, they were an excellent stomachic, and that there was a particular ingredient in them that was an enemy to every thing that clogged the stomach, he was prevailed upon to beguile the time with feeding on the appetite-creating

creating gingerbread, which he did very plentifully, ever and anon diluting with a glass of wine and bitters. The last speech of my companion, together with his taking the nuts he himself eat, and those he gave the other two gentlemen, from a different pocket than that out of which he regaled the well-larded gentleman with, made me conclude the gingerbread *seemed* with some *jest*.

By the time we arrived at Putney, continued Sable, our fat companion had emptied the pocket of my humorous conductor, of all the stomachic gingerbread, declaring it was the best he had ever tasted. We landed at Putney, where we staid

Itald only to get a fresh cargo of wine, and then returned to the general rendezvous, where being arrived, and the champion come within sight of the table, that was by this time prepared ready for the guests, he said he believed he should make a very hearty dinner, for that though he had eat a large quantity of some excellent gingerbread nuts, yet he felt a kind of a gnawing in his stomach. Soon the feast was ushered in, and my companion guessing that it would not be long before the mine sprung, prudently retired to another part of the table to avoid the explosion.

The company being all seated, each helped himself to what he chose,

chose, and presently casting my eyes upon our companion and gingerbread-eater, I saw him labouring most furiously to bring down a pyramid of turbot he had raised upon his plate, at every other mouthful drinking a small glass of wine, saying, by that means he should be able to eat as much again; having accomplished the destruction of the first plate full, he had again heaped it to its former size, and by a vigorous attack, again threatned its downfall; but now the gingerbread I suppose, began to operate, for before he had destroyed one quarter of the plate full, he began to make strange faces, and twined his body about, as if he sat upon something that made him uneasy, which
he

he continued for several minutes, at length a noise was heard to issue from his bowels, like the sound of distant thunder, and immediately starting from his chair, with great haste left the room, and so precipitate was his flight, that by his hasty rising, he overthrew one of his next neighbours, who endeavouring to save himself, pulled down a large bason of oyster sauce, that stood before him, which first falling upon his face, from thence had formed a rivulet down a crimson fatten waistcoat he had on.

By the time this unfortunate gentleman had wiped himself, Mr. Feastlove (that being the fat gentleman's name) was returned, and having

having asked pardon of the company in general for his abrupt departure, and the gentleman whom he had thrown down in particular, for the damage done to him, he again sat down, declaring he was never taken so in all his life.—A clean plate being brought him, he once more fill'd it with turbot, and having drank two glasses of wine, began to give evident tokens of a perfect recovery, but by the time he had disposed of half of it, his countenance began to wax pale, and the contortions of his body declared he sat very uneasy, and the rumbling noise in his bowels soon after alarmed the company, and seemed to be the signal for a second flight, upon which the gentlemen who sat on each side of
him

him moved as far from him as they could, left in his retreat, he might again overturn one of them; however, he yet continued upon his chair frowning and eating; after drinking a glass of wine, the noise in his bowels increased, but yet he was loath to leave the feast, though he had laid down his knife and fork and sat grinning horridly upon his chair, with his hands upon each knee, as if he had really been in an action not decent to be mentioned; but fearing, I suppose, that worse would ensue, he angrily rose from his chair, and once more hastened out of the room, cursing and wondering as he went what could be the matter with him.

This morning

This second unwilling departure, created much mirth in the company, and gave birth to many jokes at the expence of the ill fated champion. It was not long before he returned, and fixing his eyes upon my companion, swore he believed he had given him a dose of phyfic in the gingerbread, and with a stern countenance declared, if it really was so, he would resent it severely. My companion told him he had no reason to attribute his disorder to the nuts he had given him, for that he himself and two gentlemen then present had eat of them, and found no such effects: upon this the company was unanimous in opinion, that it must be owing to something else he had eat in the morning. Mr.

Feast-

Feastlove vowed that he had refrained from eating any thing that morning on account of the feast; every one then concluded the turbot did not agree with him, and Mr. Feastlove began to imagine that was the cause, therefore determined to try something else, and again sitting down, he filled a plate with ham and fowl, seeming determined to make up the time and loss he had suffered by the turbot, on those dishes. The quick dispatch he made with the legs and wings of a fowl and a slice of ham, now, assured the company that he was again restored to his usual health and vigour, and they congratulated him on his recovery. Mr. Feastlove said it was very surprising that turbot, which

which was a fish that he was extravagantly fond of, should serve him so now, particularly, and that he believed he should be able to make a tolerable dinner, but he had scarce devoured two thirds of the ham and fowl he had helped himself to, before he very gravely laid down his knife and fork, and with a mixture of sorrow and anger, protested he found the disorder was again coming upon him, — and in a few minutes the former convulsions of his face returned, which caused much mirth in the company, though they endeavoured to conceal it as much as possible. — He was now advised to drink a glass of wine made hot, which he did, and again seized his knife and fork, and

did
was

was dissecting a fowl, but the hot wine, like a basin of water gruel, aiding the physick that was lodged in the gingerbread, caused such a ferment within him, that he seemed at a loss to tell which way it would operate upon him; sometimes it appeared as if he had a fit of the cholick, and by and by, as if he had taken a vomit, and just as two fine haunches of venison appeared smoaking before him, he rose from his chair, and cursing his guts, speeded down stairs.

This third retreat surprized the company much, though they did not seem to be very sorry, it being observed he could very well afford to lose what he did. The unhappy

py eater, of the appetite-creating nuts, continued Sable, being returned, he again vented his rage against the gingerbread, swearing nothing else could have affected him so, but my companion, and the two gentlemen who had likewise eat gingerbread (though indeed not out of the same pocket) being in good health, it was determined by the company, that it could not possibly be the cause.—Mr. Feast-love said he could not tell how it was, but he was sure he had taken physick that day, and swore it was a strong dose too; — and again sat down and swore a great oath, he would not leave the room again till he had fully dined, and though he had been forced from the turbot, and

and the ham and fowls, yet nothing should make him leave the venison, while he had power to force a bit down.—Thus resolved he fell most voraciously upon the haunches of venison, depriving them of two full pounds at least, which after heating over a lamp with currant jelly and other sauce, he began to send down to keep peace in his *Corporation*, and for a considerable time I concluded the venison would prevent any farther tumult; — but before one third had been dispatched to keep the rebellious powers in awe, an alarm was begun, and the noise of contention was heard again to rumble from within the globose belly of the afflicted hero, and in a few minutes the noise encreasing, declared

declared the battle raged with great violence, but true to the cause, he scorned to be subdued.

A gentleman now recommended a glass of brandy to Mr. Feastlove, which he approving, he for a minute refrained from eating, and took off a large glass, and then fell too again, being determined, he said, to weather the storm, and the horrid faces he frequently made, and extraordinary motions of his body, declared he was very strongly summoned to depart the room again; — but soon the brandy, instead of putting an end to the intestine broil, made it ten times worse, — and just as he was opening his mouth to receive a small slice of venison, not larger than

than a moderate sized mutton shop, the gingerbread proved victorious, and drove fish, flesh and fowl, with other auxiliaries, out of the field of battle; and they lay in great disorder, scattered over the table, and endangered the eyes of the opposite gentlemen: nor was this all, for during this disaster, another party had forced open the Sally-port, and sought refuge in the breeches of the persevering hero. — The company now rose in great confusion, and a quantity of snuff was destroyed; those taking it now who perhaps never took any before. To conclude this terrible affair, the gingerbread eater, after being pretty well recovered from this last unfortunate affair, was sent home

some pounds lighter than he usually came from a feast.

The tragi-comic scene being ended, continued Sable, this worthy member of Comus's court, repaired to the rendezvous of the Choice Spirits, where he was heartily received, and recounting to them his day's exploit, set them in a roar of laughter, at the expence of Mr. Feast-love, who little dreamt, I believe, of taking a dose of physic on the feast-day of the society, though 'tis probable this Choice Spirit conferred a benefit on him instead of a punishment; in the morning this frolicksome spark conducted me to my old lodgings.

I began

I began now, continued Sable, to wish for a little respite, the pleasing novelty of my situation in Monmouth-street, gradually subsiding as the succession of my adventures encreased; and my curiosity abating, in proportion as my excursions became less pleasing. The desire I had of a little relaxation from business was gratified, the expedition I had with the *choice spirit*, being the last time I was called to aid the schemes of any of the sons of invention, who might have occasion to appear in disguise, or assist the struggles of the unfortunate in their endeavours to overcome an adverse fate, during my stay in Monmouth-street, where I remained a considerable

1724. *The ADVENTURES of a*

considerable time without any farther
employment.

During this recess from business,
continued Sable, I pass much time in
contemplating on the various modes
of happiness which mankind sought
after, and the different means they
pursued to attain their adopted wish-
es; the labours of my fellow ad-
venturers in their diurnal expeditions,
which were always communicated
to the society together with my own
experience, affording me variety of
instances. The power of reason-
ing, and of assimilating their ideas,
with which men are indued, to
enable them to distinguish the true
road to happiness, I found was of
little or no service to them in their
pursuit;

pursuit, the present gratification of
 the passions and senses, seems to be
 the chief consideration and stimulus
 later in all their actions; but when
 the vigour of youth begins to re-
 lax, and the heat of blood to cool,
 the passions and senses necessarily
 decay, and they then perceive their
 error, and lament that they did not
 in their youth, furnish the store-
 house of wisdom, with useful know-
 ledge, to enable them to pass with-
 satisfaction and tranquillity, through
 age and infirmity, and for want of
 which they become fretful and pee-
 vish, disagreeable to themselves,
 and to every one else.

The youthful auditor here thank-
 ed the sage adviser, for the lesson.

he so gently insinuated, and assured him that he would endeavour to regulate his conduct agreeably to the dictates of reason, and that his study should be to acquire a fund of knowledge, so that the faculties of his mind, might afford him pleasure when his passions and senses should deny it. The wise narrator replied, he hoped the alluring bates of pleasure would not have power to check his resolution, or destroy those blossoms of virtue whose fruit was happiness.

I next, continued Sable, became the property of a very ingenious gentleman, who has entertained the town in a variety of characters, but in none more singular, or more to
his

his emolument, during the time it lasted, than that in which I had the honour to serve him; and though he has never been remarkable for concealing his follies, yet this is a secret which he has carefully preserved. — To keep you no longer in suspense, I was purchased by this genius, to countenance him in the character of a *Fortune-teller*, a scheme which his thorough knowledge of the town, together with a great variety of anecdotes of a number of people, which he had treasured up, made him the best qualified to act of any man in London; and he was a very *Proteus*, in varying his appearance, for he would be in your company two or three times a day, if he had occasion,

son, in the same number of cha-
 racters, without my own being able to
 discover him. — It was this gentle-
 man, continued Sable, who remov-
 ed me from Monmouth-street, to a
 lodging near Charing-cross, at this
 being the place he had chose to del-
 liver his oracles from, a spot which
 time out of mind has been remark-
 able for the residence of all the ex-
 traordinary things and phenomena
 which have been deemed worthy
 the attention of this metropolis.
 Here, White, begged to know
 why that place was so particularly
 fixt upon by the industrious pro-
 viders of strange sights and rari-
 ties. Sable declared it was not in
 his power to resolve him, with cer-
 tainty

tainty in that point, but said, that as these itinerant rascals, who gentlemen, dealt in nothing but what is most properly adapted to the meanest capacity, (as some book-sellers inform the world what they publish is) so this neighbourhood may be looked upon, by these gentlemen, as the meridian best calculated for their purpose.

Every thing being settled by this foreteller of events, continued Sable, advertisements were put in the newspapers, and bills dispersed, acquainting the nobility and gentry, that a sage Egyptian, who was making the tour of Europe, was arrived in London, and that his stay would be only one month, during

which

which time they might be informed of any particular they were desirous of knowing, either past, present, or to come; attendance at Charing-cross, every evening, from six to nine, price five shillings each person.

The first who came to search the register of fate, continued *Sable*, were two ladies, one tall and the other short; the tall lady desired to know, as a specimen of the doctor's art, (for so he stiled himself) where she was on such a day, a considerable time past; the doctor having been informed of the day of her nativity, and looking over his book told her she was on the day she mentioned, in *Newgate*; the

the lady started in great surprize, — and asked how she came to be there; — as the doctor told her, she went to see a *Higbroadyman*, — the other lady then asked where she was on that day; — the Doctor, after going through the ceremony of calculating her nativity, told her she was also in *Newgate*, with the other lady on the same occasion. — These answers were thought proof enough of the doctor's knowledge of things past, — and the tall lady next desired, he would tell her the most remarkable place she had been at that day; — to which the doctor, after making a calculation by some very extraordinary figures with pen and ink, answered she had been to see the *tall man*, — where she had seen *something* that

that greatly surprized her. — Here the lady blushed, and said she was now sure he was the Devil; but the doctor declared he was only a distant relation of the infernals. — Well where shall I go to-morrow, says the lady, my mistress says the doctor, you have resolved to pay a visit to the *stall-man* again to-morrow evening *alone*, but whether you will really keep to your resolution or not, is more than the arch-fiend himself can tell. — The lady said she must confess there was more truth than manners in his answer, and that she should have expected such an answer to have been whispered when there was a third person in company. — The doctor humbly asked pardon, but said as the lady said

her

her companion was privy to her design, and intended to visit the fellow man herself another time, he did not apprehend any harm could arise in speaking of it at that time. — Well, Sir, says the lady, since I find you do know more than I imagined, I hope you are a man of honour, and at the same time put a guinea into the doctor's hand. — The doctor assured the ladies they might rely upon his secrecy, and waited upon them down a private pair of stairs which led into a street that lay behind the house.

The first trial of my genius's knowledge of the influence of the stars, continued Sable, succeeded to admiration. — White here desired to know

know what book it was the doctor extracted his knowledge from.—Sable replied, it was a common place book in which his owner entered down his anecdotes, and which he was every day encreasing, being employed all day in going from place to place where he could best gain intelligence.—you will, no doubt, wonder, says Sable, how he could come by the knowledge of the lady's secret intention, that, adds Sable, he guessed—which indeed from these ladies known character and disposition was no difficult matter to do; for he knew who the ladies were perfectly well, and, I assure you, they were both people of great distinction.

While here desired to know

The next remarkable person, continued Sable, who was desirous of consulting the stars, was an officer in the guards, who on his entrance told the doctor he had heard he was acquainted with things *above* and *below* stairs.— You understand me—continues he, and so let me have five shillings worth of information. —From which quarter, Sir, says the doctor — which quarter, replies the familiar-gentleman, — why faith, adds he, I believe it is from *below stairs*. — The doctor then desired to know the day of his nativity, and that he would propose his question, — why you must know, says the gay spark, that I have a d—'d inclination to lie with the wife of a particular friend of mine, but

but I want to know whether it will be attended with any bad consequences. — I mean, continues he, whether I should be obliged to fight in this case or not? for though I would not have you think me a coward, yet I should not chuse to draw my sword upon my friend — The doctor, after looking over his book, and making a number of hieroglyphicks as usual, told him, that though the husband would know his dishonour, yet he might be assured no bad consequences would ensue to him, for that it would only *make his friend unhappy during his life*; the son of Mars, continued Sable, was extremely well satisfied with this answer, and departed, in all probability, to confer

conferred upon his friend, this new mark of his esteem.

A young lady, continued Sable, of a fine figure; next entered, and after answering the doctor the necessary questions, told him she wanted to know when she should be married—what sort of a man she should have—and how many children?—The doctor, after consulting the book of knowledge, told her, that it would be some time before she was married—and that she would marry an old baronet, whose title and estate she would deem a sufficient compensation, for the sacrifice of her youth and beauty, to age and infirmity;—and that she would have two daughters

ters by him, both which would be born *within a month* after her marriage; and yet, adds he, your virtue will be unblemished. — Sir, says the lady, this is the most inconsistent piece of intelligence that I ever heard; I hope you don't mean to affront me, adds the lady. — The doctor replied, that what he had related to her, was but the effect of his art; what is meant he declared was yet beyond his knowledge, but, pray Sir, says the lady, does your art inform you that I shall really have two daughters within a month after my marriage, and yet my virtue be unblemished. — Madam, says the doctor, it is really as I have related, but I will take some pains to unravel the mystery — up-
on

on which he began to make a number of strange figures, and the result of his enquiry, he told the lady, was, that she would certainly have two daughters within the time he had mentioned, the eldest of whom, he said, would be born very soon after her marriage, and the other within a month after; — you will be very happy, madam, says he, in the first, for your husband will spare nothing that his estate, which will not be very small, can administer for its gratification; nor will you, madam, set any bounds to your inclinations to support and cherish it. — But you will not be so happy, says he, in your other daughter, for she will be of an insatiable

fatiable disposition, and your husband will do all in his power to satisfy it, but all his endeavours will only serve to increase its desires.—The lady declared she could not possibly understand him, and desired if he could explain himself that he would.

—The doctor answered, what he had told her he was convinced would come to pass, and that her first daughter's name would be *Pride*, and the other *Lust*.—

Upon this the lady flew out of the room, saying,—he might repent this treatment.

A little old gentleman with a white wig and rosy face, next entered our temple, and addressing himself to the doctor, told him, that

that though he had never placed any confidence in oracles, yet the fame of his great skill in astrology, made him resolve to throw away five shillings and half an hour, in consulting him in a thing he should be glad to know.—The doctor told him he would resolve him in the best manner his art would admit. The old gentleman said, that he had for many years been saving every thing he could, scarce allowing himself the necessities of life, that he might leave a fortune to his son, sufficient to raise a name; and though he had been stigmatised by many people, with not having acquired the fortune he had by the fairest means, yet he believed he had always kept

within

within the letter of the law; but, Sir, continues he, if I live six months longer, I shall be able to leave my son fifty thousand pounds; therefore, I should be glad to know what course he will take, and whether he will be much on the Exchange, as I have been.—The doctor told him, his son would follow *Newmarket course*, where, says he, he will *exchange* the greatest part of his fortune, for the qualities of a jockey, and by the time he is five and twenty, will *exchange* his liberty for a prison, where, continues he, he will *exchange* this life for another.—The old gentleman was preparing to remonstrate against the decree of the stars, but was prevented by the knocking of another visiter

visiter at the door, and he was conducted down the back stairs, complaining all the way of the partiality of fate in the unjust distribution of his fortune, and in preventing him from being the *first stone* in the foundation of a family.

The violent knocking at the door which occasioned the sudden dismissal of the old gentleman, continued Sable, was the impatience of a lady, whose dress and appearance bespoke she was of quality; she was a tall fine figure, and her face exquisitely beautiful; her eyes were full of levity, and declared the looseness of her soul: — On her entrance she told the doctor, one of his *shop bills* had been left

at

at her house, and that she had heard many people speak of his great knowledge, which induced her to wait upon him.—The doctor politely acknowledged the honour she did him, and ushered her to a seat. — Mr. What's your name—says this lady, I have been almost frightened to death these two days, by the loss of a pocket book, which I am afraid has been found by a certain person, therefore I desire you will tell me where it is, and how I may recover it.—The doctor, after having calculated the lady's nativity, and applied to his book, told her, a servant to a gentleman she had visited, had found it in his master's bed-chamber, and that he and several of his companions were

at that time sat down to examine the contents of it. — The lady said she was glad it had not fallen into the hands of the person she was apprehensive of, but desired to know if he could tell her whether there was a small book of ivory leaves in it or not? The doctor told her, he would let her know the whole contents in a few minutes. — Upon which he began to make a great variety of incomprehensible figures, and in the conclusion told the lady, in one of the pockets there was a paper of *car-*
ming, and several sorts of powders, in the second, there was a small lock of *flaxen-coloured hair* inclosed in a letter, which was dated from

the *Temple*, and contained passionate expressions of the most tender love and eternal constancy, with an acknowledgment of favours in the most delicate terms. — The lady told the doctor there was no necessity for his being very particular, the doctor proceeding said, there was a picture in miniature of an officer, concealed under a pocket looking-glass, with several tender billet-doux addressed to Amaryllis, which had been slipt into her ladyship's hand; in the same pocket, continues he, there is a miniature of a certain nobleman which was given to your ladyship upon your marriage; well, hang the picture and the original too, says the lady, is the

the book with the ivory leaves there? I shall inform your ladyship presently, replies the doctor:—In another pocket, there is a collection of *curious pictures in India paper*, given to your ladyship by the gentleman who gave your ladyship the lock of hair, and artfully concealed in a small almanack book:—Here the lady blushed and told the doctor, she desired only to know if the book she mentioned was there. — The doctor begged a moment's patience; — in his private pocket, continued he, there is a small *viol* of red liquor; and in another private pocket, there is a number of appointments to meet in a wood in Kensington gardens, and various other

places, and a small book of ivory leaves, containing a short account of the art of intriguing, with a select number of extraordinary good excuses in case of *suspicion*, and some excellent *salvos* for *palpable discoveries*, wrote by your ladyship's own hand, and which is the book. I presume, says the doctor, your ladyship enquired so particularly for it. It is, answered the lady, and now pray, says she, inform me how I can get it back again. — The doctor answered, he believed if her ladyship would advertise it with a handsome reward she might recover it; the lady declared she would give any thing for it, and putting two guineas into the doctor's hand,

said

said she hoped she might rely upon his secrecy; the doctor assured her she might, and then conducted her to a hackney coach waiting at the door for her.

The next who came to consult the keeper of the book of knowledge, continued Sable, was a young lady of a most engaging countenance, her natural air and the taste of her dress, seemed to vie with each other, in rendering her an object of love,— if it was possible for envy to have fixed upon any thing that seemed imperfect, it must have been rather too much levity, which her eyes expressed. This young lady having informed the doctor, what

he required to know, she told him she had three lovers, who made their addresses to her; one, she said, was a gentleman of the law, another was a lieutenant in the army, and the third a gentleman of no profession, and desired to know which of them she should have; the doctor having consulted his book, told her she should marry neither of them; the young lady was a good deal surprized, and desired if she should have neither of them, — to know who else would be her lot. — I find, miss, says the doctor, you will have several offers from tradesmen, whom you will reject; for though you have no fortune, yet you will adhere to your darling hopes

hopes of marrying a gentleman, but you will be deceived in your expectations. I have always been told, says the lady, by people of your profession, and that by more than one, that I should be married to a gentleman.—Those who have told you so, replies the doctor, deceived you; they have injured many young people, adds he, by flattering the passions of the credulous, which has influenced the conduct of weak people, and laid the foundation of their ruin.—Sir, says the lady, I believe it is a maxim amongst *Fortune-tellers*, to speak ill of every one in the profession besides themselves, but Sir, adds she, you have not told me who I am

to marry. — It is out of my power, madam, says the doctor, for though I can frequently see you a *Votress* at the *altar of Love*, yet I cannot find that you will ever enter the *Hymeneal Temple*. — I must confess, says the lady, you are the most discouraging foreteller of events that I ever met with, and I have had my fortune told me by *Cards*, *Coffee-grounds*, by inspecting the *lines* of my *hand*, and by the *Man in the Old-Barley*, and have always been told that I should marry a *handsome black gentleman*, nay, how many children I should have, and that I should be very prosperous, and end my days in a *large handsome house*. My art deceives me greatly,

ly, replies the doctor, if there is any truth in any of these things, except indeed, that you will end your days in a large handsome house. What, you do agree with him in that ! says the lady, I should be vastly glad if you can tell me whereabout it is situated ; the doctor, after having taken some time in ascertaining the Geography, told her, he could not tell her any other way, than by sketching out the appearance of it ; and in a few minutes told her, if she would look upon a paper he shewed her, she might probably know it ;—the young lady was very eager to behold the plan of the mansion that she was to conclude her life in, and perusing

it attentively, I saw her cheeks glow with indignation, and throwing the paper down, left the room, pronouncing as she went—an *Hospital* indeed!

The first appearance of this young lady, says Sable, revived in me the sensations of my youth, and I must confess my heart was greatly interested in her fate; but the information of the doctor filled me with great anxiety, though I hope his presages will prove his knowledge not infallible.

A lady far declined in the vale of years, next entered to consult the stars: The fame of your great knowledge

knowledge in the mysteries of fate, says: this antiquated lady, hath made me resolve to wait upon you in an affair that concerns me very nearly: The doctor assured her, that as far as his knowledge extended, he would answer any thing she was desirous of knowing: Sir, says the lady, I have a fortune of twenty thousand pounds, and am yet a virgin: but, adds she, I have thoroughly considered the design and end of marriage, and am now convinced that it is an institution calculated for the mutual benefit of both sexes. The scripture too, continues she, instructs us to associate together for the procreation of our species, and therefore

fore I am now resolved to comply with the dictates of the divine law and the *call of nature*—(I must confess, says Sable, I was a good deal surprized to hear a woman, who seemed to be not far distant from what is called the grand climacterick of her age, talk of the procreation of her species in this manner, and of her resolution to follow the *call of nature*). Your sentiments, madam, says the doctor, are certainly right, and I have chosen, says this wrinkled old lady *a proper young Gentleman* to partake of conjugal felicity with me, and by whom I may fulfil the divine command: Undoubtedly, madam, says the doctor, a young man is more proper
for

for such cases than a man of your own years; I think so indeed, Sir, says the lady, though I believe I should have children by almost any man; for I am of a very fruitful family, nor am I, continued she, so old as perhaps you may imagine me; —but, Sir, says she, my business with you, is to know whether I shall receive any ill treatment from him, how many children I shall have, and whether my intentions will be thoroughly answered by marrying this young gentleman, for I am resolved upon that, and the marriage writings are bespoke. Madam, says the doctor, I will resolve you presently; upon which he turned to his book, and after casting the necessary

necessary figures for information, told the lady, she might depend upon receiving no *male-treatment* from her intended spouse: that all her *reasonable* expectations would be answered, such as having the credit of one of the handsomest men in town for her husband, keep what company she pleased, go where she pleased; and in short, do what she pleased, as she did before marriage, for that her husband would never trouble her about any thing:--But, Sir, says the lady, you don't speak of the other comforts I should expect, and which was my chief design in marriage.--All the other comforts of marriage, Madam, says the doctor; you will receive by *Proxy*.—*Proxy*, Sir! says the lady, what do you mean?

Why,

Why, madam, replies the doctor, you will enjoy your husband's company, at bed and board by *Proxy*, bear children by *Proxy*. Don't tell me, Sir, interrupted this ancient virgin, of bearing children by *Proxy*; I look upon myself as capable of bearing Children as any young girl whatever, and assure you, Sir, I shall not desire any one to bear them for me; and so, Sir, your servant, and immediately hobbled down stairs repeating frequently as she went, the word *Proxy*.

And now, my son, continues Sable, to his gay companion, I believe I have related to you all the occurrences, that are worthy your attention, during my stay with this fortune-

fortune-teller; were I to give you a detail of every particular person's desire, whose simplicity or curiosity brought them to your nocturnal temple, it would take up more time than I fear I have to continue with you, nor would it be either entertaining or instructive to you, but rather the vast numbers of people, of all ranks, who came to enquire how far they and their trivial concerns were the peculiar care of the stars, would create in you a mean opinion of the wisdom of the inhabitants of this town. — The truth is, continued Sable, the particular disposition of the people of this metropolis, to credit the most absurd and impossible performances, when undertaken by *Foreigners*, is

one of their chief characteristics ; and the preference and encouragement given to Foreigners of all denominations, who come here, as to the Land of Promise, to seek their fortunes, enables them to return and purchase estates in their own country, whose produce is equal to the revenue of many Princes ; and I have heard it said, that there is at this day, a most superb and magnificent house, or rather palace, in Italy, which was built by a famous eunuch, who resided here some time ; on which he has wrote on several conspicuous places,

ENGLISH FOLLY.

You will naturally ask, says Sable, what the excellence of these strollers consists in ; — in an exceeding acute taste, continues he, in the choice

choice of the most debilitating pleasures, that can render the mind mean and contemptible; and as there are always people who make a business of pleasure, these panders are at hand, ready to administer to them, the fruits of their knowledge; so that, continues Sable, those who for half a score of years, have been under tutors, beginning to restrain the power of their passions, are in a few months deprived of the benefits they have paid so dearly for, both in time and money; and by listening to these purveyors of pleasure, give themselves up to every ignoble gratification, that can debase the mind, or corrupt their sentiments.

Sable

choice

Sable having indulged himself in exposing the ill consequences that result from the extraordinary encouragement Foreigners receive to export themselves among us, thus continued his narration.

The retailer of the events of fortune, resumed Sable, having exhausted all his stock of knowledge, and the limited time of his continuance in this metropolis being expired, he disposed of the utensils belonging to his profession, such as a beard of a most reverend length, a pair of globes, magic wand &c. &c. to the manager of a strolling company, to equip serjeant Kite for an Egyptian astrologer;

but

but I was disposed of to an old
cloathsmen, the manager refusing
me, saying he had already in his
wardrobe, a Black Coat for an Un-
dertaker, Apothecary or Parson.

The dealer in left-off cloaths,
resumed Sable, having deposited
the consideration which was ex-
changed for me, thrust me into his
green bag, and marched with me
again to my old neighbourhood of
St. Giles, where I was no sooner
arrived, than I began to experience
the torment of the brushes, and
remained twenty-four hours, stretch-
ed upon the rack, and then was
delivered over to a butcher, to re-
pair the fractured fibres which the
press

press had forced a sudden. My old preservative the nap, behaving like a faithless friend, abandoned me, when I stood most in need of assistance. My owner having thus furnished me up, I was conducted into the shop, and hung among the better sort of second-hand gentlemen.

The third day, continued Sable, I was summoned into the parlour, and was ordered to be tried upon a middle-aged gentleman, and met with his approbation, for leaving his former attendant, which was in a very bad condition, and paying a small fee more to the salesman, he conducted me to a street near

near Red-Lion-Square, where he ascended into a garret. It being evening, continued Sable, I had not an opportunity of forming any judgment of the profession of my new owner, though I imagined he was either a great economist, or that poverty and he were joint tenants of the apartment; for upon the candle's going out (which from a seeming affection to my unknown master, had long laboured to support life) he retired to rest, though very early in the evening; — as soon as day-light would permit me, continued Sable, I began to take an inventory of the furniture, which I found consisted of an old miserable bed, and
bed-

bedstead, with a coverlet and an old blue curtain; which was fixed to the side of the bedstead, adjoining to the casement, a white-washed wall served to keep the wind from intruding upon the privacy of the reposed gentleman on the other side, and also to receive that which some people of a phlegmatick constitution, carry with them in their pockets. A table next presented itself, which seemed to lament the loss of a flap, that either time, or something else, had amputated from it, and which was laid across a chair, the cane-bottom having given way; two other maimed chairs supported themselves by leaning against the wall,

one

one of which sustained the, the next were two deal boxes, which occupied a fourth part of the room, one of which wanting a lid disclosed a confused heap of papers, amongst which I saw the covers of a letter directed to Mr. Stanza, and lastly a shelf that ran the length of the room, on which lay one black pudding.

From the letter and papers in the box, continued Sable, I concluded, I was now the property of an author. Early in the morning, Mr. Stanza (that being my owner's name) got up, and taking down the blue curtain, wrapt it about him, tying it round with a garter; so that

it made a tolerable good morning gown, wanting nothing but sleeves, and sitting down to the table, he put the finishing stroke to a poem, and then read it over with great satisfaction. He next prepared to equip himself to go out, which took up the best part of two hours; (including the cleaning of his shoes,) and performing some very dexterous operations on his stockings) however, at length, he was drest, and carefully folding up his poem put it into his pocket, and after reconnoitring the street door through the casement, sallied forth. Near Gray's-Inn, in Holborn, two men slept up to him, and one of them whispering him in the ear, inform-

H

ed

ed him of a piece of news, that I found by his "rueful length of face" was rather disagreeable to him, and these two gentlemen conducting him to a house in Gray's-Inn-Lane, I found the bard was under an arrest, though I did not imagine a poet was within the jurisdiction of any court, but the court of criticism, or that he was liable to answer any plaint but what arose within the province of *Parnassus*. However Mr. Stanza was left by his two companions under lock and key; but as he soon began to recover his spirits, I imagined he intended to remove the plaint, and have his cause tried before *Apollo*, but

but he was the next day, for want of bail, removed to the Fleet-Prison.

This prison, continued Sable, tho' it is said to be the best in the kingdom, is a most shocking place, the generality of the inhabitants being those who have brought themselves here, either by idleness or extravagance, and very few of those bring in with them any principle of honesty or sense of shame, or if they do, they generally get rid of such troublesome companions in a very short time; most of them divert reflection by amusement, or drown it by debauchery, which weakens the

mind to such a degree, that they scarce ever after are capable of reflection, as some colds take away the voice, which is never to be recovered again; those who are forced thither by misfortunes, find it difficult to maintain their principles; so naturally and imperceptibly do we imbibe the sentiments and manners of those with whom we are accustomed to converse.

One day being at the billiard table, which is permitted to be set up here for the recreation of *Gentlemen*, I recognized the person of my ingenious companion the sharper, who it seems, had been excelled

in

BLACK COAT. 173

in his own way, and outwitted by a bailiff; I must confess, says Sable, if it should have happened, that I should ever have had occasion to have enquired for this genius, I should have applied to this place, if I had not found him in the *printed Register of Deaths* published by the *Ordinary of Newgate*: And it is more than probable the latter will be yet honoured with his name. — But to return to my fellow prisoner Mr. Stanza, who had, I learned, been in his youth a man of galety, and had with great facility run through a pretty fortune, and afterwards run through the several characters of gamester, fortune-

hunter, and sharper, but with very indifferent success, and had now taken up the *lucrative* calling of a poet. The bard, continued Sable, whose happy disposition was superior to fate, in two or three days, began to be reconciled to his situation, and applied very closely to his profession, consuming much ink and paper; and in three months, that I continued with him there, he had written three acts of a tragedy, two acts of a comedy, almost finished a dramatic pastoral entertainment, and drawn many characters for farces, besides several poetical essays, which from the want of taste in the publishers, had been rejected and lay dead upon

upon his hands; but the publick will have the pleasure of perusing them in his works, which he intends to publish by subscription, having already written thirty pages of a preface: add to these, continued Sable, he was an excellent *Handycraftsman*, and three times a week, furnished the carpenters and joiners of a certain periodical work with *easy chairs*, *wooden spoons*, &c. &c. &c. * the materials for which, he pilfered from the storehoules of several eminent Parnassian merchants, and sold as *new cut* from the *Forest of Parnassus*, daubing it over by way

* Vide titles to several *wooden* pieces, inserted in Lloyd's papers.

of disguise, with a nasty composition of his own making. — You will think, continued Sable, from what I have related to you concerning Mr. Stanza, that he was a man of great erudition and genius, as well as industry and perseverance. It must be confessed, says Sable, that if he could not boast so much of the former, as some authors, it is certain that he excelled most of them in the latter, so that what was deficient in quality, was amply made up by the quantity; and though it might be alledged against him, that his labours did not any way contribute to the improvement of his readers; yet, should
he

he be arraigned by some ill-natured critick, for not having answered the intention of his profession, he might, with great propriety, plead his *head*, as women at the Old Bailey, sometimes in arrest of judgment plead their *belly*; and if the court should direct a jury of criticks to enquire, if he had *neither wit or learning*, they would, if it was an impartial jury, certainly return *non est inventus*, and consequently, he would be discharged.

During my abode, continued Sable, with Mr. Stanza in this repository of vice and folly, the bard had contracted an acquaintance with a certain quack, who from

the length of time he had been here, and the visible decay of his drapery, was become worthy observation, as ancient coins become valuable by rust and antiquity. The bills of mortality too had long mourned his absence, the number of deaths being sensibly diminished during the doctor's seclusion from the world. This gentleman, continued Sable, had tried many schemes to regain his liberty, but hitherto without effect: at length he fell upon an expedient, that indeed promised no better success than any of the former; but the doctor being of a disposition not easily discouraged by difficulty, he resolved to put the

trial

of it into execution; accordingly, he drew up an advertisement, *addressed to unmarried ladies*, which he put in one of the daily newspapers, setting forth, that a single gentleman of a good family, was confined in the Fleet for an inconsiderable sum, and that if any lady who had a fortune sufficient to enable her to live genteelly, with the addition of the advertiser's practice in his profession, was willing to accept of a husband, who would make it his study to evince his gratitude, he was willing to *change his state*, and might be spoke with by any lady at the lodge of the Fleet-Prison.— This scheme was looked upon (should it prove successful)

successful) by some people, as exchanging a temporary confinement for a perpetual slavery ; — but the doctor was one of those, who were certain that locks and bolts were more difficult to burst asunder than the bonds of matrimony, and indeed, in the doctor's opinion, there was no tie, either divine or human, that was half so binding as that which was made of iron : he likewise knew that his profession would enable him at any time, to get rid of a disagreeable wife, as well as a troublesome patient. The doctor, as I hinted before, continued Sable, had received much damage in his wardrobe, and now constantly made his appearance in a long
morn-

ing gown, which served instead of coat and waistcoat, and some people scrupled not to say, for breeches too; but that I had some reason to believe was not true; for, in order to aid the son of Æsculapius in his matrimonial scheme, Mr. Stanza, at the doctor's request, consigned me over to him, in lieu of the morning gown, that the doctor might be able to receive any ladies who might apply to him, in consequence of the advertisement, and I luckily fitted the doctor extremely well. — The second day after advertising, the doctor was called down to the lodge, and immediately obeying the summons: he was introduced to two young ladies, who

whom I soon recollected to be the same who sat in the box with me at the play-house, when the sharper so ingeniously carried off the old gentleman's rocqueleau; these ladies diverted themselves for some time at the expence of the doctor, and then left him, not a little chagrined at the first disappointment; however, he was in the dusk of the evening again summoned to the lodge, where he found an old lady waiting for him, whom he politely addressed: The compact shoulders and promising legs of the doctor, continued Sable, drew a more than ordinary attention from this ancient lady, and influenced her so much in his favour, that in
a very

a very short time the match was concluded, and every thing was settled for the doctor's departure the succeeding morning, for which purpose the lady gave him a bank note; and left him overjoyed with his good fortune. The doctor immediately went to Mr. Stanza, acquainted him with his success, and begged the bard would let him keep me, and set his own price upon me.—This matter was soon settled, and I remained with the doctor, who generously made a present of the gown to Mr. Stanza. In the morning, continued Sable, the lady came to her appointment; and the doctor after having taken leave of his fellow prisoners,

prisoners, handed the lady into a hackney coach, and immediately drove to the temple of Hymen, and from thence they went a few miles out of town to celebrate the nuptials, and in the evening came to the lady's house in Southwark, where the marriage was consummated. The facility with which this marriage was conducted, continued Sable, did not, however, outstrip the eager wishes of the parties to have it concluded; the lady was perhaps stimulated by charity, and could not sleep, till she had released a man of the doctor's figure from misery; and the doctor, I suppose, was no less uneasy, till he had once more an opportunity

nity of circulating his medicines, to the great emolument of his good friends the *Undertakers*, whose trade had languished very much during his long confinement. The next morning, continued Sable, the doctor determined to shew himself amongst his brethren of the faculty, and accordingly conducted me to St. Thomas's Hospital: here he was congratulated by his acquaintance upon recovering his liberty, which the doctor received with an extraordinary good countenance. During our stay in the womens ward at the hospital, continued Sable, I recollected, amongst the unhappy creatures, the features of the daughter of Mr. Sirloin, who was
so

so well recovered from a *Saliva-*
tion, as to convince me by her
behaviour, that she was an aban-
doned prostitute: I was struck
with surprize and pity, continued
Sable, to see what a wretched con-
dition she was reduced to, and my
censure was involuntarily fixed up-
on the ill conduct of her parents,
but chiefly, upon her mother's ill-
placed pride and silly expectations,
that something might happen: a vain
hope, says Sable, frequently indulg-
ed by weak people, and indeed
what has happened to this young
woman, is too often the conse-
quence of encouraging pride and
folly in those who have nothing to
support it. The doctor, continued
Sable,

Sable having perambulated through all the hospitals the morning would admit, returned home to his spouse, and in the afternoon, made his appearance, at all the coffee houses within the circle of his knowledge. The next morning, continued Sable, the taylor brought home a new suit of cloaths, upon which I was deposited in the wardrobe. And now, my son, says Sable, to his youthful companion, I think, I have performed. Here Sable, was unluckily prevented from concluding his adventures by the entrance of a person, who took away White, the companion and auditor of the sage narrator; but 'tis presumed, he had only a few words more

more to have entirely ended ; and as truth has presided over our pen, throughout the relation of these uncommon adventures, we are not at liberty to set down words that were really never uttered ; therefore we chose to leave Sable's last sentence broken, rather than put down any thing we have not authority for, as some historians do. And now, gentle reader, we take our leave of thee, hoping thou hast received as much pleasure in the perusal of this delectable history, as the relation of it from the sage's mouth afforded us.

F I N I S



